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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

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10 April 1967

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Approved For Release 2006/02/07 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010044-8

Approved For Release 2006/02/07 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001800010044-8

Information as of 1600
10 April 1967

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HIGHLIGHTS

There were no significant political or military developments in Vietnam during the past 24 hours.

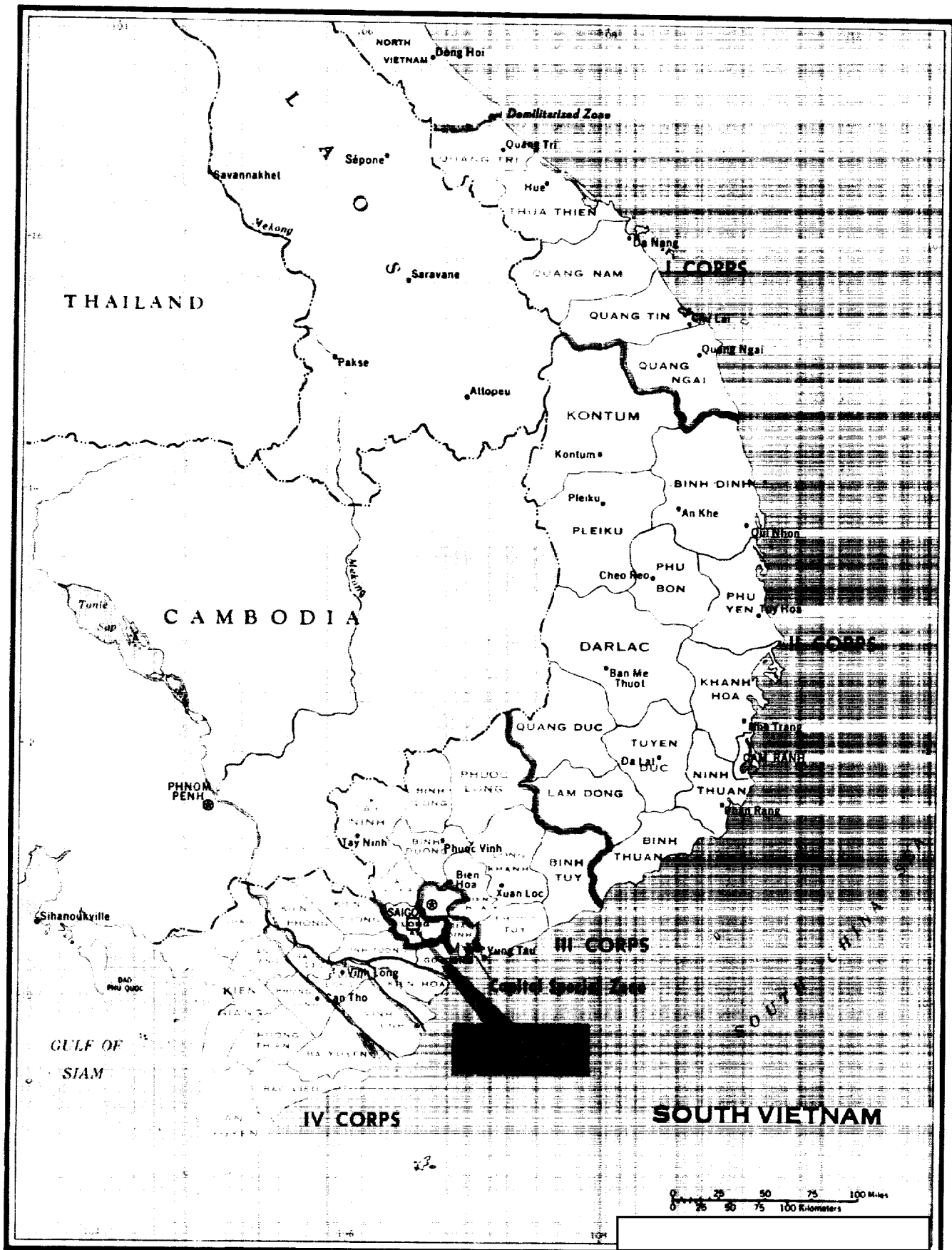
I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
The Communists lost 166 troops killed in two days of fighting in Long An Province (Para. 1). In an effort to strengthen their organization and leadership at the grass-roots level, the Communists are apparently transferring key military and political cadres from higher to lower echelons of the Viet Cong apparatus (Paras. 2-7).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
There is nothing of significance to report.

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:
There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: North Vietnamese Defense Minister Giap calls again for a stronger self-defense militia force (Paras. 1-2).



I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Elements of the US 9th Infantry Division participating in search-and-destroy Operation ENTERPRISE have terminated two days of sporadic heavy fighting 15 miles southwest of Saigon in Long An Province. According to postaction reports, 166 Communist troops were killed compared with US losses of 16 wounded. The enemy force in contact has been tentatively identified as the 261st Viet Cong main force battalion.

Communist Organizational Realignment

2. There are continuing indications that the Communists in South Vietnam are transferring key military and political cadres from higher to lower echelons apparently in an effort to strengthen organization and revitalize leadership at the grass-roots level.

3.

[redacted] the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN)--the Viet Cong political and military high command in South Vietnam--reportedly issued a directive on 1 January 1967 which called for cadres now at the COSVN and military region levels to move down to the provinces. Cadres now at the province level will be moved to the district level, and those at district level to village committees. This downward movement apparently will place better qualified cadres at lower echelons. Presumably qualified NVA cadres are being infiltrated to fill the vacuum at the COSVN level.

4. In recent months there have been reports that some Communist district and village cadres have been "demoralized" by allied military pressures, by the prospects of fighting what they believe will be a protracted war, and by the South Vietnamese Government's Chieu Hoi or "Open Arms" program. It has also been alleged that North

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Vietnamese cadre--specialists in antipacification activities--were being infiltrated to replace "demoralized" cadres and those lost to normal attrition. "Purges" of cadre have reportedly occurred in at least 11 of South Vietnam's 44 provinces.

5. The reports of weaknesses, and in many cases the lack of low-level cadres, may possibly be true. Captured enemy documents and some prisoner/rallier interrogation reports reflect manpower shortages in certain areas of South Vietnam. The alleged difficulty in replacing personnel and in obtaining qualified cadre may be borne out by what appears in some areas to be increased VC reliance on the recruitment of women and youth for district and village guerrilla units and village-hamlet organizations.

6. Captured documents indicate that several reorganizations may have taken place within the last year in the Viet Cong political and military apparatus. Reportedly, rear services, postal transportation, and provincial headquarters complexes have been reorganized with the objective of increasing the efficiency of these elements and releasing more men for combat. Administrative units at all echelons were supposed to comply with a COSVN directive to pare down their strength and provide more men for political organizations and armed units.

7. The possible effect of the reorganization and reshuffling of cadres would be to streamline the Communist chain of command and simultaneously to bolster control at the lowest levels with more dedicated and knowledgeable cadre. Many Viet Cong village and hamlet cadres have shown a lack of experience and managerial capability, often adversely affecting their performance. These efforts by the Communists could also be attempts to reinforce and stimulate lower level organization in anticipation of facing a growing threat from the government's own village/hamlet reforms and its Revolutionary Development program.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. The Vietnamese Communist military leadership's debate over the issue of military strategy in the war in South Vietnam--reflected in articles and speeches by military figures since mid-1965--is apparently continuing. The latest in this series is a lengthy speech by North Vietnamese Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap given at a military conference in North Vietnam last January and broadcast in part on 7 and 8 April. In the part of his speech available to date, Giap offered a strongly worded apologia for the importance and "strategic value" of the self-defense militia force and its development as "one of the main duties of the Vietnamese people in bringing the resistance to a final victory.

2. In underscoring the importance of the militia, Giap was apparently attempting to answer other elements within the DRV establishment who have been advocating a greater reliance on main force units or who have been pressing for greater balance among the three categories of military units; main force, local force, and self-defense militia. Giap's position on the militia forces has been clearly documented in the past two years in articles and statements in which he has repeatedly called for the strengthening of the self-defense militia in both quantity and quality.

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